



Australian  
String  
Quartet

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### ***The Australian String Quartet a Specialty in Beijing***

The **Australian String Quartet (ASQ)** is becoming an esteemed ensemble in China. The group has recently returned from an intensive week-long residency at the prestigious **Central Conservatory of Music (CCoM)** in Beijing, where it garnered respect and critical acclaim from audiences, students, industry and dignitaries alike.

The Quartet's masterclass program formed a vital part of the visit. Across four days ASQ members Dale Barltrop, Stephen King, Francesca Hiew, and guest cellist Rachel Tobin delivered intensive masterclasses to 18 separate string quartets on behalf of the **University of Adelaide's Elder Conservatorium of Music**, forging strong relationships with some 72 students, professors and tutors of the CCoM.

While in Beijing, the ASQ was also invited to perform a recital at the **Beijing Modern Music Festival** as part of the **International Society for Contemporary Music's World New Music Days 2018**. The Quartet's performance attracted music-lovers, students, and official guests from the Australian Embassy including Maree Ringland - Public Affairs and Culture Counsellor and Joanna Bayndrian - Senior Cultural Relations Officer.

The program spotlighted contemporary works by Australian composers Stephen Whittington and the late Peter Sculthorpe alongside György Ligeti, Philip Glass and two new works by Chinese composers Jianping Tang and Ping Gao.

*"It was a delight to discover and hear the Australian String Quartet at the Beijing Modern Music Festival/World New Music Days Festival in Beijing. Its cohered ensemble playing defined a gutsy and infinitely sensitive group of performers, touching beyond music to Asian-Pacific cultural identity and spirit."* Bruce Crossman, First Delegate, ISCM Australia Section and Associate Professor Music, School of Humanities and Communication Arts, University of Western Sydney.

The Australian String Quartet is forging strong relationships with the CCoM in Beijing through its association with the University of Adelaide's Elder Conservatorium of Music, where it is Quartet-in-Residence. The invitation came by way of Adelaide University lecturer Stephen Whittington's relationship with the Central Conservatory of Music which was strengthened following the Orient Quartet residency that the ASQ jointly hosted with the Elder Conservatorium of Music, last year. This is a wonderful coup for both the University of Adelaide and the ASQ.

**For further information contact Samuel Jozeps, Marketing and Communications Manager on 0429 645 436 or [sjozeps@asq.com.au](mailto:sjozeps@asq.com.au).**

## **BIOGRAPHY – AUSTRALIAN STRING QUARTET**

For over 30 years, the Australian String Quartet (ASQ) has created unforgettable string quartet performances for national and international audiences. Dedicated to musical excellence with a distinctly Australian character, the Quartet's purpose is to create chemistry and amplify intimacy through experiences that connect people with string quartet music.

From its home base at the University of Adelaide, Elder Conservatorium of Music, the ASQ reaches out across Australia and the world to engage people with an outstanding program of performances, workshops, commissions and education projects. The Quartet's distinct sound is enhanced by a matched set of 18<sup>th</sup> century Guaragnini instruments, handcrafted by Giovanni Battista Guaragnini between c.1743 and 1784 in Turin and Piacenza, Italy. These precious instruments are on loan for the ASQ's exclusive use through the generosity of UKARIA.

*Dale Barltrop plays a 1784 Guaragnini Violin, Turin*

*Francesca Hiew plays a 1748-49 Guaragnini Violin, Piacenza*

*Stephen King plays a 1783 Guaragnini Viola, Turin*

*Sharon Grigoryan plays a c.1743 Guaragnini Violoncello, Piacenza, 'Ngeringa'*

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